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COUNTRY East Germany

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SUBJECT Research on Synthetic Material for Pipes

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1. In May 1952, Heinrich Rau, former head of the DDR State Planning Commission, ordered the Zentralamt für Forschung und Technik (ZAPT) to conduct research on a synthetic material for pipes destined to transmit low and high pressure gas. The reason for the order is the State Planning Commission's project for sending gases from the Lauchhammer coke plant to the Riesa steel works. The pipes are to be made from synthetic material because the DDR is short of seamless steel pipes; East Germany is not able to manufacture seamless steel pipes with a diameter exceeding 200 millimeters.
2. The special order from Rau followed shortly the failure of tests made with Vinidur pipes at the Arnstadt, Thuringia, gas works. A 500-meter test length of Vinidur pipe blew up when subjected to pressure of four atmospheres. Vinidur is a synthetic based on polyvinyl chloride which is produced by the Bitterfeld combine.
3. Following the explosion, high pressure experiments at Arnstadt were stopped. Tests with pressures up to one atmosphere, however, are continuing.

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